

b) Amendments to the Claims

Please amend claims 41, 42 and 45-48 as follows. A detailed listing of the status of all the claims that are or were in the application has been provided.

Claims 1-40 (Cancelled)

--41. (Currently Amended) An exposure apparatus comprising:

(i) a laser oscillating apparatus, said laser oscillating apparatus generating illumination light,

 said laser oscillating apparatus including gas supply path structure having a convergent-divergent nozzle, said gas supply path structure having a fluid inlet into which a laser gas is made to flow, a throat portion for controlling a flow speed of said laser gas to less than a speed of sound and a fluid outlet of which said laser gas from said throat portion is made to flow out and a waveguide unit having a plurality of slots for guiding microwaves into said gas supply structure,

(ii) a first optical system for radiating said illumination light from said laser oscillating apparatus onto a reticle in which a predetermined pattern is formed; and

(iii) a second optical system for radiating said illumination light having passed through said reticle, onto a surface to be irradiated.

42. (Currently Amended) An exposure apparatus comprising:

(i) a laser oscillating apparatus, said laser oscillating apparatus generating illumination light,

said laser oscillating apparatus including a gas supply path structure group which has a plurality of convergent-divergent nozzles, each nozzle comprising a fluid inlet into which a laser gas is made to flow, a throat portion for controlling a flow speed of said laser gas, and a fluid outlet of which said laser gas from said throat portion is made to flow out, and

a waveguide unit having a plurality of slots for guiding microwaves into said gas supply path structure group, wherein said gas supply structure group includes a light-emitting portion for generating a laser beam, and the flow speed of said laser gas at said light-emitting portion is higher than a speed of sound,

(ii) a first optical system for radiating said illumination light from said laser oscillating apparatus onto a reticle in which a predetermined pattern is formed; and

(iii) a second optical system for radiating said illumination light having passed through said reticle, onto a surface to be irradiated.

Claims 43 and 44 (Cancelled)

45. (Currently Amended) A method for producing a device comprising:

(a) a coating step for coating a surface ~~to be irradiated~~ with a photosensitive material;

(b) an exposing step for exposing a predetermined pattern in said photosensitive material ~~employing exposure apparatus~~; and

(c) a developing step for developing said photosensitive material on said surface after said exposing step (b) wherein said exposure step ~~exposure apparatus~~ includes

(i) ~~a laser oscillating apparatus~~ generating illumination light, ~~said laser oscillating apparatus including~~ by irradiating a laser gas in a gas supply path structure having a convergent-divergent nozzle, ~~said structure a fluid inlet into which a laser gas is made to flow, a throat portion for controlling a flow speed of said laser gas less than a speed of sound, and a fluid outlet of which said laser gas from said throat portion is made to flow out, and~~ with microwaves guided by a waveguide unit having a plurality of slots for guiding microwaves into said gas supply path structure;

(ii) ~~a first optical system for radiating~~ guiding said illumination light ~~from said laser oscillating apparatus by a first optical system~~ onto a reticle in which a predetermined pattern is formed; and

(iii) ~~a second optical system for radiating~~ guiding said illumination light having passed through said reticle by a second optical system, onto the surface to be irradiated.

46. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 45, wherein said surface to be ~~irradiated~~ coated is a wafer surface and a step of forming a semiconductor element on said wafer surface.

47. (Currently Amended) A method for producing a device comprising:

- (a) a coating step for coating a surface ~~to be irradiated~~ with a photosensitive material;
- (b) an exposing step for exposing a predetermined pattern in said photosensitive material ~~employing an exposure apparatus~~; and
- (c) a developing step for developing said photosensitive material on said surface after said exposing step (b), wherein said exposing step ~~exposure apparatus~~ includes

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- (i) ~~a laser oscillating apparatus~~ generating illumination light ~~said laser oscillating apparatus including by irradiating a laser gas in a gas supply structure group to generate a laser beam at a light emitting portion thereof, said gas supply structure group having~~ which has a plurality of connected convergent-divergent nozzles, ~~each said nozzle comprising a fluid inlet into which a laser gas is made to flow, a throat portion for controlling a flow speed of said laser gas, and a fluid outlet of which said laser gas from said throat portion is made to flow out; and~~ with microwaves guided by a waveguide unit having a plurality of slots for guiding microwaves into said gas supply path structure group; wherein ~~said gas supply structure group includes a light emitting portion for generating a laser beam, and~~ the flow speed of said laser gas at said light emitting portion is higher than a speed of sound,

- (ii) guiding a first optical system ~~for radiating~~ said illumination light ~~from said laser oscillating apparatus by a first optical system~~ onto a reticle in which a predetermined pattern is formed; and

(iii) guiding ~~a second optical system for radiating~~ said

illumination light having passed through said reticle by a second optical system, onto the surface to be irradiated.

48. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 47, wherein

said surface to be coated ~~irradiated~~ is a wafer surface and a step of forming a semiconductor element on said wafer surface.
